

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL  
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY  
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 2008*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

Eleven years ago, the Congress came together to approve legislation that put the country on the road to mental health parity. But along that road, too many potholes remain unfilled. A letter I received last week from a Michigan psychologist reads, "Every day I see families with 'good health coverage' discover that their loved ones cannot get the mental health care they need because their employer-sponsored health insurance sets arbitrary, one-size-fits-all limits on mental health treatment that it does not impose on other medical or surgical benefits."

When the National Institute for Mental Health reports that 1 in 4 adults have a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year, and 1 in every 17 Americans suffers from a more serious mental condition, we know that it is time to take action. Whether it's a friend with signs of clinical depression, a son or daughter with a drug addiction or a parent with schizophrenia, too many people are not receiving the treatment that they need. In fact, a study conducted by the NIMH found that only 18 percent of Americans requiring mental health services received minimally adequate care.

We are all too familiar with the burden that inadequate access to mental health care can cause. People experiencing severe mental illnesses routinely exceed the number of allowable visits to a health care provider, leading to financial hardship or insufficient levels of care. Under the current system, a person seeking mental health services may have to wait months to get an appointment with a practitioner in his or her insurance plan's network, or have to pay a fortune out-of-pocket for mental health care.

The legislation before us ensures that Americans will have access to the mental health care they need by removing these barriers. Specifically, the bill requires health insurance companies that offer mental health benefits to offer them in a way that beneficiaries pay no more out of pocket than they would pay for physical and surgical health benefits. The bill also requires insurance companies that cover mental health benefits to cover the entire spectrum of them so that treatment for conditions like substance abuse and eating disorders will be covered.

All of us should join in supporting this important legislation to continue moving America along the road to parity, and the eventual elimination of discrimination, financial hardship and insufficient levels of care in our health care system.

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SPEECH OF

**HON. GARY G. MILLER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 2008*

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. To be clear, I support mental health parity and I commend my colleagues for coming together to ensure Americans can receive the care that is necessary; however, I have serious concerns about extraneous provisions that were added to the bill at the last minute.

This legislation, while seeking to increase access to mental health treatment, simultaneously raises the cost of doing business for companies who choose to provide low cost medication to the Medicaid program. In addition, the bill stifles the growth of certain specialty hospitals in an effort to bring more business to public hospitals. In a time when we should be encouraging the expansion of all types of medical care, we should not be punishing one part of the industry in order to pay for the expansion of another.

Providing access to quality mental health care is an important goal. Yet, I believe this goal can be achieved without harming unrelated aspects of the medical field, which is why I oppose H.R. 1424 and I support S. 558. If the House had brought up S. 558, which does include any of these problematic provisions, we could well be on our way to expanding mental health parity. I encourage the House to move forward with the Senate version so we can send this bill to the President as soon as possible.

HONORING CENTRALIA ORPHANS  
BASKETBALL TEAM

**HON. JOHN SHIMKUS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2008*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the Centralia Orphans basketball team, which on Friday, February 15, 2008, became the first high school boys' basketball program in the State of Illinois—and just the second in the nation—to record its 2,000th victory.

The visiting Orphans defeated the arch-rival Mt. Vernon High School Rams 45–43 to reach the milestone.

Current members of the Orphans include Evan Burmester, Adrian Dabney, Ben Kracht, Stile Smith, Carlton Westbrook, Keith Johnson, Justin Keef, Devan Wells, Brandon Buchanan, Myron Cunningham, R.J. Kwiatkowski, and Mark McConaughy. Their head coach is Lee Bennett, who is assisted by Brad Goewey, Ryan Blaha, and Doug Jack.

Since its beginning in 1906, the Centralia boys' basketball team has featured such standout players as future Olympic track star Dwight "Dike" Eddleman, future Harlem Globetrotter Bobby Joe Mason, and future Los Angeles Laker Dickie Garrett. The Orphans

have won three Illinois State championships, all under legendary High School Hall of Fame Coach Arthur L. Trout.

I send congratulations to the players, coaches, students, alumni, and fans of Centralia High School on a remarkable achievement.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL  
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY  
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 2008*

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of a teenager from Bensalem, Pennsylvania for whom mental health care came too late. I rise in favor of a health care system that works for those in need.

This legislation not only promotes fairness for those with mental illness, it also will not pre-empt stronger State laws. Laws, such as Pennsylvania's Act 106, which has saved countless lives.

I stand with a Republican State representative from my district—Gene DiGirolamo—as we fight to preserve these critical laws in conference. Mr. DiGirolamo of Bensalem is a leading advocate for mental health parity and has worked tirelessly for health care laws that are fair and just.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is bipartisan and long overdue. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for it.

The Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act is designed to end discrimination against those seeking treatment for mental illness.

This discrimination is real, and it affects the lives of millions of people every day.

We have all heard the stories of the negative stigma surrounding post traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury from veterans returning from battle, and each of us has a family member or friend who has struggled at one time or another with mental illness.

Reauthorizing this important measure has waited for more than a decade—that is too long.

I am proud to be supporting it today and proud to have fought to include provisions that will keep this bill from pre-empting stronger State laws.

Act 106 is an example of a life-saving, crime-reducing law in Pennsylvania that will be preserved because of this important bill.

Act 106 not only helps addicts regain control of their lives, but also makes our State a safer and more pleasant place to live.

This protection is just one of many important items included in this bill, and Act 106 is just one of many State laws that we should preserve.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is critically important and while I am proud to support it, I must register some reservations about how we go about paying for it.

As a fiscally conservative Blue Dog Democrat, upholding the PAYGO rules are important, but the offsets chosen for this legislation are ones that have been used for another piece of legislation.

We are a Nation at war and a Nation in debt. Each person in this country owes more than \$30,000 in debt because of the reckless spending habits of the past.

We need to make sure we pay for the bills we pass, but I have some serious concerns about passing two bills—two Democratic priorities—that are paid for with the same money.

I urge our leadership, that as we go to conference on both of these pieces of legislation we ensure that we have a fiscally responsible approach that is also equitable for all those involved.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a great step forward, and it has the support of doctors, nurses, and families across the country.

I am proud to cast my vote in favor of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act.

### CONDEMNING THE ONGOING PALESTINIAN ROCKET ATTACKS ON ISRAELI CIVILIANS

SPEECH OF

**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2008*

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 951, a resolution to condemn Palestinian rocket attacks on Israeli civilians. As one who is consistently against war and violence, I obviously do not support the firing of rockets indiscriminately into civilian populations. I believe it is appalling that Palestinians are firing rockets that harm innocent Israelis, just as I believe it is appalling that Israel fires missiles into Palestinian areas where children and other non-combatants are killed and injured.

Unfortunately, legislation such as this is more likely to perpetuate violence in the Middle East than contribute to its abatement. It is our continued involvement and intervention—particularly when it appears to be one-sided—that reduces the incentive for opposing sides to reach a lasting peace agreement.

Additionally, this bill will continue the march toward war with Iran and Syria, as it contains provocative language targeting these countries. The legislation oversimplifies the Israel/Palestine conflict and the larger unrest in the Middle East by simply pointing the finger at Iran and Syria. This is another piece in a steady series of legislation passed in the House that intensifies enmity between the United States and Iran and Syria. My colleagues will recall that we saw a similar steady stream of provocative legislation against Iraq in the years before the U.S. attack on that country.

I strongly believe that we must cease making proclamations involving conflicts that have nothing to do with the United States. We incur the wrath of those who feel slighted while doing very little to slow or stop the violence.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. RIC KELLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2008*

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I have remained in Orlando, Florida with my

wife and our new daughter who was born on Monday, March 3rd. If I had been present yesterday, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall 91: "yea"; Rollcall 92: "yea"; Rollcall 93: "yea"; Rollcall 94: "nay"; Rollcall 95: "nay"; Rollcall 96: "nay"; Rollcall 97: "yea"; Rollcall 98: "yea"; Rollcall 99: "nay"; Rollcall 100: "yea"; Rollcall 101: "yea"; Rollcall 102: "yea".

HONORING NELLIE RUTH RILEY  
LEWIS

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2008*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise with a great sense of loss as I pay tribute to Nellie Ruth Riley Lewis, an educator, prominent Dallas community leader, and my friend who left us on March 1, 2008, at the age of 70. Throughout her life, Nellie Lewis was a well-known, respected figure in Dallas who leaves behind a legacy of accomplishments that will be remembered for years to come.

A native of North Carolina, Mrs. Lewis received her bachelor's degree from Howard University and her master's degree in education from George Washington University. For the first 17 years of her career, she taught in the public schools of Washington, DC, where she became the supervising director of reading for the District.

Mrs. Lewis moved to Dallas in 1977 with her late husband Dr. Lewis, where they were both employed with the Dallas Independent School District. During her 20 years with DISD, Mrs. Lewis' duties included serving as an instructional specialist, a curriculum coordinator, and an area director. She also served as director of learning services, the administrative assistant to four superintendents, and supervisor to a group of 10 elementary school principals.

She continued her lifelong devotion to education, even after her retirement from DISD, serving on several committees and as the president of the Dallas region of the National Alliance of Black School Educators.

In 1997, Mrs. Lewis received the Charles D. Moody Founder's Award, presented by the National Alliance of Black School Educators.

As our Nation experiences great technological innovation and success in the global market, the value of an education takes on even greater importance. Mrs. Lewis has exhibited the characteristics we seek in our educators, school administrators, and community activists.

Mrs. Lewis was married to Napoleon B. Lewis, who preceded her in death. In addition to her son, Mrs. Lewis is survived by three sisters: Inez Riley McClain of Fayetteville, NC; Carolyn Riley Payne and Deborah Riley, both of Seattle, WA; and three grandchildren.

On this day, Madam Speaker, I join her family, her friends, and all of Dallas and the Nation, in mourning the loss of a dear and special friend. She will be greatly missed.

CONGRESSIONAL CLUB  
CENTENNIAL

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 6, 2008*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today, along with Representatives TODD TIAHRT, JEFF MILLER, DORIS MATSUI, JO-ANN EMERSON, and JOHN TANNER, to introduce a resolution to commemorate the Congressional Club on its 100th anniversary.

The Congressional Club was established in 1908 "to promote sociability among its members, create a common meeting place, and further a personal acquaintance among the women of the Congressional circle." In the early 20th century, Members of Congress actually had little time for making friends outside of Congress or Government. It largely fell upon the wives to forge acquaintances in the Nation's Capital, since many of them led solitary lives while away from their home States.

In 1914, the club moved into a Beaux Arts-style mansion on the corner of New Hampshire Avenue and U Street, Northwest, in Washington, DC, where it continues to be the meeting place to this day. It has maintained its mission of serving as a place for spouses of Members of both the House and Senate to develop non-partisan friendships. In addition, its membership has been broadened to include both female and male spouses as more women have been elected to Congress over the last century.

The club also counts among its members spouses of Supreme Court Justices and the President's Cabinet, as well as former First Ladies. It has been a center for service since its founding—providing aid to our Nation's soldiers; supporting local police and fire departments; and hosting receptions for senior citizens, the disadvantaged, and spouses of Ambassadors. It is entirely self-supporting from membership dues and the sale of the Congressional club cookbook, which includes recipes and signatures of Members of Congress, First Ladies, Ambassadors, and members of the club.

It is interesting to note that 100 years ago this May, it took the charm of a determined wife of a Member of Congress to get the Federal legislation incorporating the club approved by the House of Representatives. The House Minority Leader, John Sharp Williams of Mississippi, had opposed the bill and was using parliamentary procedures to defeat the bill.

History has it that when Mrs. Williams, who favored the club, heard about her husband's opposition, she invited him to lunch the day the measure was on the House floor. After lunch, he withdrew his opposition and his request for a recorded vote, saying that "it is the opinion of the gentleman from Mississippi that . . . there will not be a roll call because it would cause a great deal of unhappiness in Washington."

As the proud spouse of the current president of the Congressional Club, Vivian Creighton Bishop, it likely would cause a great deal of happiness in my household and the households of many other Members if this resolution is voted upon in the near future. I am pleased to be the sponsor of this resolution commemorating the club on reaching this important milestone and I urge its quick adoption.